

Amendments to and Listing of the Claims:

Please amend claims 1-2, 8-12 and 14-15, and cancel claim 7, without prejudice, so that the claims read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of producing an electrode alloy powder, comprising:
a first step of mixing a starting powder comprising a hydrogen storage alloy containing 20 to 70 wt% of Ni with water to moisten said starting powder;
a second step of immersing a said moistened starting powder ~~comprising a hydrogen storage alloy containing 20 to 70 wt% of Ni~~ in an aqueous solution containing 30 to 80 wt% of sodium hydroxide at a temperature of 90°C or higher and;
a ~~second~~ third step of washing with water said powder which has been subjected to said ~~first~~ second step.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 1, further comprising a ~~third~~ fourth step of mixing said washed powder with an oxidizing agent in water after said ~~second~~ third step.
3. (Original) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 1, wherein said starting powder has a CaCu₅ type crystal structure and comprises an alloy containing a mixture of rare earth element, Ni, Co, Mn and Al.
4. (Original) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 3, wherein a Co content in said starting powder is 6 wt% or less.
5. (Original) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 1, wherein a mean particle size of said starting powder is 5 to 30 μm.
6. (Original) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 1, wherein an oxygen content in said starting powder is 1 wt% or less.
7. (Cancelled).

8. (Currently Amended) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 7 1, wherein said ~~additional~~ first step is a step of pulverizing coarse particles of a hydrogen storage alloy containing 20 to 70 wt% of Ni under an aqueous condition ~~having water~~ to have a mean particle size of 5 to 30 μm .

9. (Currently Amended) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 1, wherein said ~~first~~ second step is a step of immersing said starting powder in said aqueous solution containing 30 to 80 wt% of sodium hydroxide for 0.2 to 3 hours.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 1, wherein said ~~second~~ third step is a step of washing with water said powder which has been subjected to said ~~first~~ second step, until a pH of used water becomes 9 or less.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 2, wherein said ~~third~~ fourth step is a step of adding an said oxidizing agent ~~in a~~ to water having a pH of 7 or more in which said washed powder is dispersed.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 2, wherein said ~~third~~ fourth step is a step of adding, while stirring, a hydrogen peroxide solution ~~in a~~ to water having a pH of 7 or more in which said washed powder is dispersed.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of producing an electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 12, wherein an amount of hydrogen peroxide to be added is 0.5 to 15 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of said washed powder.

14. (Currently Amended) An electrode alloy powder produced by the method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said starting powder ~~containing~~ contains 3 to 9 wt% of a magnetic substance comprising metallic nickel.

15. (Currently Amended) A battery ~~including~~ comprising said electrode alloy powder in accordance with claim 14.